

Chapter 1

Golden Rule 1. The Law of Cause and Effect

The Banquet of Consequences

Susan Soseau goes through life half well. Some days she's "up and at 'em," but all too often she's "down and out." Her doctors can't find anything specific to do about this, other than give her a little extra thyroid. But even taking her pills faithfully doesn't seem to help Susan much. It wouldn't be accurate to say that Susan is really sick, but neither could one say that she's really well. True health and a sense of well-being seem to elude her.

Millions limp along through life like Susan. The sad part is that it doesn't have to be this way. It is not God's will that there be so much sickness. In 3 John 2 the inspired writer echoes God's desire for His people: "Beloved, I pray that all may go well with you and that you may be in health" (R.S.V.).

Reasoning from cause to effect, we see that what is done today has quite an effect on what tomorrow will be like. Of course, one of the problems with our understanding of health consequences is that even "burning the candle at both ends" doesn't cause heart trouble in one week. Most likely it will take about 20 years of smoking two packs of cigarettes per day before a fatal case of lung cancer or emphysema develops. So smokers take out a long-term mortgage against health—their most valuable personal asset.

Samuel Johnson is quoted as saying that "The present is the consequence of the past" and Robert Louis Stevenson is said to have put it this way: "Sooner or later we must all sit down to a banquet of consequences." What kind of banquet is that? Obviously, it's one that we prepare for ourselves. Will your banquet of consequences be luscious? Or will you merely pick away at the dried bones of bitterness, and hungrily settle for the crumbs of defeat? The consequences are your own.

Why is there so much illness and disease everywhere? Simply put, when an individual violates the golden rules God has given for the preservation of life and health he/she, naturally, suffers the consequences. But this is not intended to make you feel guilty. The good news is that YOU can make your banquet of consequences the very best possible if you take the law of cause and effect seriously.

The golden rules of life and health are written on every nerve, muscle and faculty which have been entrusted to us. They imply the promise of happiness and well-being, but only if they are understood and applied. It is most important, then, to make an honest attempt to understand what these golden rules are all about and put them to work in our lives.

In studying the significance of the laws of life to see how each applies to specific areas of lifestyle, we could make suggestions, but they might not be the ones that actually fit your particular circumstances and needs. The best approach will be for you to apply these golden rules for yourself.

Cause and Effect

The law of cause and effect underlies all the other golden rules. When we violate the laws the Creator has given for the preservation of health and happiness, the inevitable consequences result. These laws work either for us or against us. By following them carefully, we can expect the most out of life. To know them and use them, to work in harmony with them, is to release undreamed of potential—we feel better, get along with others better, and our lives are brought into focus. Each action produces a result on every aspect of life—affecting the physical, mental, social, and spiritual well-being.

There's no need to go into great detail about how the golden rule of cause and effect operates. You know about it already. You've had health rules drummed into your ears. "Don't smoke, you'll get lung cancer." "Don't overeat, you'll get obese and die younger." "Drive safely." Most of us have learned that these warnings are too true.

Donald John puts the result of our choices in these interesting terms: "God made people to work in a certain way. And he no more slaps them down for eating forbidden apples than Henry Ford does when we use the wrong kind of gas. Disease, hurt feelings, disappointments, are not the result of an immature God getting mad at capricious creatures. They are simply the natural results of man choosing less than the best. Far less."—Insight, July 1974, p. 8.

Not all disease is preventable. One law of life that we cannot do much about is heredity. The unhealthful practices of previous generations have their effect on each of us today. Of course, geneticists are trying to identify and correct the codes of some of the genes that cause health problems but so far, at least, cannot keep them from forming to start with. There also are health problems that can be linked

to factors beyond our personal control, such as pollution and nuclear explosions. But, in spite of these, much illness results from overt violation of the laws of health. Fortunately, God has endowed the human body with the capacity to resist disease, but we must cooperate by learning the laws of health and using them effectively.

The golden rules for healthful living, when followed consistently, pay rich dividends indeed. Do you want to be able to do whatever you've chosen to do in life consistently well and with real efficiency? Do you want to wake up each morning feeling on top of the world? It is possible if you'll let the law of cause and effect work FOR you instead of AGAINST you.

The Cancer Plague Illustrates This Law

Although, at this writing, heart disease still is the number one killer in the United States, cancer is fast catching up and soon may be in first place. Experts in the United States have learned that at least 85 percent of cancer can be prevented by measures that help cut down on the known causes of this terrible plague. How does cancer hit the body? A single cell, triggered by a bit of radiation, a trace of toxic chemical, a virus or a random error in the transcription of the cell's genetic message begins, an abnormal pattern of growth. It may continue to proliferate wildly, forming a tumor that expands into healthy tissue, competing with normal cells for nutrition. Then it may slip away stealthily, extending finger-like probes into the bloodstream finally establishing a beachhead on healthy tissue where it begins to prosper at the expense of neighbor cells, dividing and forming new tumors. It tricks nearby cells into forming blood vessels that feed it and produces a spiny armor that kills marauding immune cells. Eventually it invades and destroys vital organs, incapacitating them and at times bringing death. This dread scenario occurs with increasing frequency. The American Cancer Society estimates that nearly 600,000 in the U. S. will die each year from cancer and even more new victims will come down with this disease. Does cancer sound like a plague? It is! But there also is GOOD NEWS! Most cancer is preventable. Why this is so can be seen when we look at its causes.

1. Smoking-Smoking accounts for about 30 percent of all cancer deaths. Those smoking two or more packs of cigarettes per day have mortality rates 15 to 25 times that of non-smokers.

2. Nutrition-Risk for colon, breast, and uterine cancer increases in obese people. High-fat diets may contribute to the development of cancers of the breast, colon, and prostate.

3. Alcohol-Oral cancers and cancers of the larynx, throat, esophagus, and liver occur more frequently among heavy drinkers of alcohol.

4. Estrogen-Estrogen treatment to control menopausal symptoms may increase risk of endometrial cancer.

5. Radiation-Excessive exposure to ionizing radiation can increase cancer risk.

6. Sunlight-Almost all of the more than 600,000 cases of basal and squamous cell skin cancer diagnosed every year in the U.S. are considered to be sun-related.

Note that tobacco use and harmful diet account for about two-thirds of cancers. Most of the factors listed above are areas in which cancer can be prevented if we avoid cancer-triggers. Cancers greatest cause is known to be a poor diet which causes about 35 percent of all cancers. The American Cancer Society spells out five protective dietary factors:

1. Eat more cabbage-family vegetables:

Broccoli

Cauliflower

Brussels sprouts

Cabbage

Kale

Protect Against:

Colorectal

Stomach

Respiratory Cancers

2. Add More High-fiber Foods:

Whole grains

Fruits

Vegetables

Protect Against:

Colon Cancer

3. Choose Foods with Vitamin A:

Carrots
Peaches
Apricots
Squash
Broccoli

Protect Against:

Esophagus
Larynx
Lung Cancers

4. Choose Foods with Vitamin C:

Grapefruit
Cantaloupe
Oranges
Strawberries
Red and green peppers
Broccoli
Tomatoes

Protect Against:

Esophagus
Stomach Cancers

5. Add Weight Control:

Exercise
Low fat,
Low Calorie Diet

Protect Against:

Uterus
Gallbladder
Breast
Colon Cancers

To summarize, a proper, well-balanced diet is one of the most important means of cutting down the risk of cancer. We need to adopt a low-fat, low-cholesterol, low-calorie, high-fiber diet that is rich in vitamins and phytochemicals.

We need to be aware of is the 7 warning signals of cancer. If you notice any of these you should see your doctor right away.

CANCER'S 7 WARNING SIGNALS

1. Change in bowel or bladder habits
2. A sore that does not heal
3. Unusual bleeding or discharge
4. Thickening or lump in breast or elsewhere
5. Indigestion or difficulty in swallowing
6. Obvious change in wart or mole
7. Nagging cough or hoarseness

-American Cancer Society

Considering the astronomical costs associated with cancer treatment, an ounce of prevention is worth thousands of pounds of cure. The more steps you take to prevent cancer, the more years will be added to your life and the more life will be added to your years. Taking control of lifestyle is key to feeling better and reducing cancer risk.

We Reap What We Sow

The ancient Scriptures summarize the first golden rule this way, "Whatsoever a man soweth that shall he also reap" (Galatians 6:7). I can't think of a better way of phrasing it. A state governor, visiting a penitentiary, saw a prisoner working in the area where prison clothes were made. "What are you doing? Sewing?" asked the governor. "No, sir," replied the prisoner regretfully. "I'm reaping." We DO reap what we sow.

Some think of God as an arbitrary Judge just waiting for us to do something wrong so that He can punish us. But God doesn't act that way. God DOES NOT destroy humans. He sets up laws which, if properly followed, lead to health, happiness, and a better life. He does all He can to get people to cooperate with His golden rules because He desires a good life for us. But we are free to choose for ourselves. And the choices we make determine our menu at the banquet of consequences. What, then, are you going to do about it? The intelligent, life-preserving choice is to reason from cause to effect and to follow a course that will bring the very best that life has to offer. Reaping will be according to sowing. Nature's laws transgressed will become our tormentors. But by beginning now to sow the seeds of obedience to the laws of life and health, our banquet of consequences will be a happy one.